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us a number of different years and we have always thought that the school boards, if they had a problem, they ought to solve it. If they can't solve it, they ought to get a new school board. That's what elections are all about. I don't think we are going to solve this problem by putting a hardship on certain cases and I brought this on this amendment for I am fearful that we might be doing what we do not think we are going to do, if we pass this bill, whether the amendment is on it or not. So I am speaking to the amendment with the idea that I don't think it will clear the problems that we have. The school boards can solve those problems. If they don't, they ought to be replaced. Thank you.

SPEAKER: Senator Cavanaugh is next.

SENATOR CAVANAUGH: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, especially my good friend, old local control Lewis, this amendment...Senator Warner was a little more candid. You might as well kill the bill as adopt an amendment like this. The issue here is school bus safety and any kid who rides a school bus is entitled to a safe ride. This Legislature has backed away from the issue, which is evident, for years and years. We can't write a good school bus safety bill because of the pressure applied by local school districts, and in that case we are talking about money versus safety. It is the old question. That's all we are talking about. That's what this whole issue is about. You got the school districts, who on a local basis, are under a tremendous amount of pressure to operate within certain budgets and one of the things that they have found that is convenient to save money with is to cut down the number of school buses and increase the number of children who have to ride on them and that is a practical reality and this Legislature has got an obligation of relieving them from that very bad political situation and they can cuss us from here to heaven over the fact that we required them to provide a sufficient number of vehicles to provide safe rides for school children and we can and should take the pressure for that. I don't think that the local school boards can take the pressure. The Legislature has the obligation to see that all children of the state are educated. Commensurate with that obligation, we have to see that they get to the schools. Commensurate with that obligation, we have to see that they get to the schools safely and that is what the bill is intended to do. Now, we know that the school districts have enough political muscle in this Legislature to prevent a good school safety bill from being passed. Senator Swigart has made a good faith effort to get as close to safe bus conditions as is politically possible in this Legislature and any standard that we adopt should apply to any child who rides a school bus, whether privately contracted or publicly provided. There is no difference between the safety that a child is entitled to simply because the school district contracts with a private provider of transportation. Any school child in this state who is attending a public school is entitled to a safe ride on a school bus and because his district is providing it rather than contracting for it, he is entitled to the same safe ride. No question that this amendment should be defeated.

SPEAKER: The Chair recognizes Senator Marsh.